

MEDIA STATEMENT

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For immediate use

MINISTER NZIMANDE WELCOMES PORTFOLIO COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORT FINAL AMENDMENTS TO THE AARTO BILL

The Minister of Transport, Dr Blade Nzimande, welcomes the progressive move by the Portfolio Committee on Transport to accept the final amendments on the Administrative Adjudication of Road Traffic Offences (AARTO) Bill.

The Bill will now go to the National Assembly for concurrence and will then be ready to be signed into law by President Cyril Ramaphosa.

South Africa is a signatory to the United Nations Decade of Action for Road Safety, 2011 to 2020 and expected to reduce road carnages by 50%.

“As a country, we are experiencing an average of just under 14 000 deaths per annum, which equates to about 38 people every single day, who lose their lives on our roads,” said Minister Nzimande.

The implementation of AARTO is amongst the critical interventions to reduce these fatalities and save lives on our roads.

“Through AARTO, we are putting in place an effective, efficient and streamlined system that will take routine traffic offences out of the over-stretched court system and create incentives that increases compliance to road traffic laws, said Minister Nzimande.

Minister Nzimande further said that AARTO will enable government to:

- overcome the wide discrepancies in the penalties imposed by different magistrates (or applied in different jurisdictions) for the same types of traffic violations;
- ensure uniformity in the different sentencing norms for the majority of serious traffic violations which are generally too low to be adequately prohibitive;
- ensure that sentences are more appropriately attuned to the differential capacity of offenders to pay – hence creating the need for alternative sentencing options;
- be tough on those who do not pay fines imposed and those who ignore summonses to appear in court.

Under AARTO, fines and penalties will be standardized for all traffic violations and will give effect to the Points Demerit System.

It will be for the first time that government brings certainty and effective mechanism to ensure that persistent offenders are taken off the road through license suspension/removal or loss of the Operators' Licences. The system brings with it improved fine collection procedures and a revenue stream that will be used for improving road safety; as well as more convenient ways of paying fines," said Minister Nzimande.

Minister Nzimande calls on all South Africans to embrace and welcome this development that will usher in a new era in South Africa's fight against road fatalities.

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